

## Student satisfaction rises sharply

Student satisfaction at George Brown is way up this year. The percentage of satisfied full-time students zoomed ahead by 2 full percentage points from last year to more than 73 percent. That rate of increase is a whopping 3 times higher than that of the Ontario system as a whole, which grew by scant half percentage point.

In fact, George Brown had a clean sweep in all of the four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which are used by the college and provincial government in measuring college performance. It registered better rates of growth than the college system in graduate satisfaction, employer satisfaction and graduate employment as well student satisfaction.

That speedy growth means that George Brown is more quickly narrowing the gap with the provincial KPI average. George Brown's student satisfaction rate, based on a province-wide written survey conducted here among more 6,000 full-time students in February, found many more students satisfied with their education and future prospects for career success.

In fact, many more students related their studies to a future career. The percentage of students who responded positively to the statement "Overall, this program is giving me knowledge and skills that will be useful in my future career," increased almost 4 per cent to 87 per cent.

George Brown is quickly catching up to other colleges in Toronto, which had average student satisfaction of 75.8 per cent, and colleges across the province, where 77.8 per cent of students were either satisfied or very satisfied. The rate of satisfied George Brown graduates also shot upward – with a 2.8 per cent increase over last year to 82.1 per cent, while provincially the rate increased by less than one per cent to 82.8 per cent.

Employer satisfaction with the George Brown graduates they hire increased by 1.5 per cent, while provincially the same measure held steady at 92.6 per cent.

## George Brown unveils innovative, sustainable house design

It looks a bit like a huge upside canoe. But while this innovative George Brown-designed house might look out of place in a subdivision, it may one day help save the world's environment.

The canuhome – as in "Can 'u' make a difference?", but pronounced canoe-home – models one path to a sustainable housing future. It incorporates sustainable materials and features passive solar heating and other engineering developments to minimize energy use and impact on the environment.

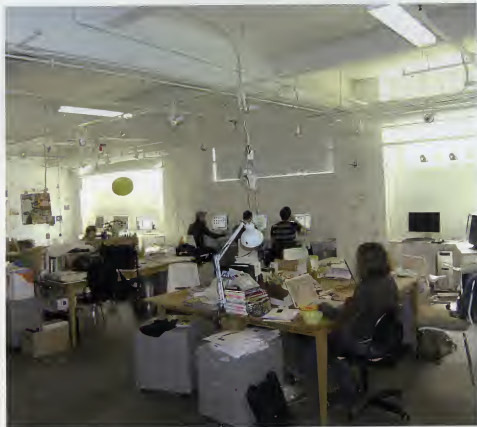
The house – the result of more than a year of creative thinking by George Brown students and staff in the Institute without Boundaries graduate program – was unveiled to the world in late April at Toronto's Green Living show.

Thousands of show-goers, including Premier Dalton McGuinty and Toronto Mayor David Miller, toured the house, hearing explanations of its environmentally-friendly features by George Brown student tour guides.



Canuhome, a model for an environmentally friendly and sustainable house designed at George Brown's Institute without Boundaries, was unveiled to the public at the Green Living Show at Exhibition Place on April 25. It features passive solar heating and other innovative engineering techniques to reduce energy use. Toronto Mayor David Miller and Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty were among thousands of people to tour the home at the show. It will be set up at Yorkdale shopping centre from June 5 to 15.

(continued on page 2)



The Institute with Boundaries studio and work space at 207 Adelaide St. E. The graduate programs' 10 students spend half their days in classes with experts in design and related fields and their afternoons, and often evenings, working on real-world projects such as the canuhome and an affordable housing project in Costa Rica.

## Institute with Boundaries students tackle real world problems

Students in George Brown's five-year-old Institute without Boundaries (IwB) graduate design program spend their days developing solutions for real world problems.

Currently they are planning affordable, sustainable housing for a town in Costa Rica where tourism has put a decent house beyond the financial reach of many local people. The goal of the 10 students in the program: create a house that would cost no more than \$8,000 to construct and that would be kind to the environment. After doing research and coming up with preliminary designs this past fall the students headed down to Costa Rica in December, 2007 for a reality check. The reactions and suggestions of residents are now informing their designs — which will be showcased in an exhibition in the Caribbean country in 2009.

The 9-month program attracts people from many different professional backgrounds and countries. Currently there are landscape architects, scientists, humanities grads, and architects in the program. Half the students are

Canadians and half from Europe or the U.S. Landing a spot in the selective program isn't a matter of marks — it's more a good fit with the student team and the needs of the project they're assigned. "It's more like applying for a job," explains Associate Director Dan Nelson.

Students in the program spend their days in a funky basement studio space at 207 Adelaide St. E. near the St. James Campus. Their mornings are spent in classes led by subject experts, their afternoons — and often evenings — are spent working in teams on their projects. But the casual atmosphere doesn't mean a casual work pace — their work is critiqued and they are given grades.

The program, which is moving in September to leased space on Richmond St. with the rest of the design programs, was partnered with designer Bruce Mau for its first two years culminating in the Massive Change exhibit at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

For more information go to [www.institutewithoutboundaries.ca](http://www.institutewithoutboundaries.ca)

## canuhome (continued from page 1)

The canuhome is designed to educate and empower people about what they "can" do to decrease their utility bills, improve indoor air quality, and help the environment.

The full-sized, one-bedroom home — measuring 79 square-metres — showcases the latest in sustainable and universal design with features such as improved indoor air and environment quality; a reduced ecological footprint through energy, water and resource efficiency; universal, accessible and adaptable design to meet changing needs; and affordable green financing.

The house exhibit brings together a diverse group of partners in an innovative effort to stimulate more intelligent housing solutions for Canadians. Partners include Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), The Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD Canada Trust) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

"CMHC is proud to be a partner in creating and showcasing innovative and intelligent housing solutions through the canuhome exhibit," said Peter Friedmann, CMHC Ontario General Manager. "As Canada's national housing agency and authority in housing technology, construction, design and finance, CMHC recognizes the importance of creating sustainable, equitable and affordable communities."

The house is constructed using Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products and is eligible for savings through green financial tools available from CMHC and TD Canada Trust. "IwB's collaboration with CMHC began in 2006 when IwB adapted housing designs that CMHC had created for non-profit and affordable housing groups.

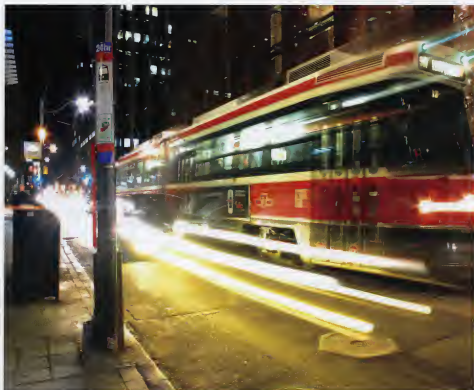
The partnership continued as IwB incorporated CMHC research into their World House Project in Costa Rica. Building on the research conducted in the World House Project, a team of faculty, students and experts have created the canuhome as an exemplary home environment that re-imagines how we may live in the near future," said Luigi Ferrara, Director of George Brown's Centre for Arts & Design and Institute Without Boundaries.

Housing affordability is inherent in this intelligent design as it is more durable, adaptable, lasts longer, is more efficient, and less costly to operate.

The canuhome will next be on display at the Earth Tones Event at Yorkdale Shopping Centre from June 5 to 15, and at IDEX/NeoCon Canada 2008 at the Direct Energy Centre from September 25 and 26.



**DRESS TO IMPRESS:** Fashion student Kayla Lew models a evening gown designed by graduating Fashion Techniques and Design student Andrea Swanson in the student fashion in late April.



**STUDENTS PHOTOGRAPH TORONTO ON THE MOVE:** Graphic Arts student Vasilis Glezakos's photo of a downtown Toronto at night took second prize in the 2008 Director's Design Competition. Entries to the competition will be on display in St. James lobby in May as part of CONTACT 08 – a city-wide photography show.



**EASY (ON THE ENVIRONMENT) RIDER:** Mechanical Engineering Technology student Carlo Vivona shows off an electric scooter he and nine other students designed and built as a class project. The Electrovespa, which recycled the body of a 40-year-old gas Vespa scooter, is designed to run at 60 kilometres an hour for 60 minutes before a three hour battery recharge. The project was one of several on display at the Technology in the City open house on March 26, which took on a green theme.



**JEWELLERY ARTS PROF WINS INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION:** Jewellery Arts professor Reena Ahluwalia (above) was recently awarded the highly-coveted North American Tahitian Pearl Trophy (TPT) by The Cultured Pearl Association of America for her pearl-encrusted necklace (above) called *Ethereal Rhapsody*. This prestigious international affair, which took place earlier this year in New York, was judged by top jewellery and accessories magazine editors, as well as a member of the Cultured Pearl Association of America. *Ethereal Rhapsody* won the Song of the Stars Trophy – North American category, and now enters the TPT International Awards phase, to be judged by the international jury in Kobe Japan this May. Reena also placed second in both the bracelet and brooch categories of the competition.

# President Anne Sado

There is no better way to measure our performance as a college than by asking our students. Their input on our strengths and our weaknesses is crucial to our ability to continue along a road of academic and operational improvement. Because no matter how much time and money we invest in improving their experience, and no matter how well we think we're doing, if they don't see it, there is more to be done.

So when this year's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were released April 9 (reported on Page 1), I was anxious to see whether all the efforts we have been making on our five-year plan were being felt at the student level.

I am pleased to say that they are. We continue on an upward curve in overall student satisfaction that started in 2000. With more than 73 per cent of our students reporting that they are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their George Brown Experience, we're now at the highest level of student satisfaction ever achieved. We have made significant gains across the board and are closing the gap with provincial averages on all key fronts.

There is however, more to be done. Our Path to Leadership sets a high objective, but one that we have the momentum to achieve.

For program related KPIs, we experienced the most substantial increase since we started on our five-year plan. Given our focus on the Academic Strategy, this is an encouraging sign. Our focus on curriculum development and program delivery are paying off. This trend also supports the success of our investments in student and graduate success, specifically the construction of the new Career Centre at Casa Loma and improvement of our library services.

Results in graduate employment and employer satisfaction also continue to be strong. This is an important achievement in the context of our objective of creating workplace ready graduates who will be

employers' candidates of choice. Once again, our graduates are able to secure employment in their field of study at a higher rate than that of the province, and our overall graduate employment rate is stable at close to 90 percent. These are significant accomplishments.

Historically, it's in the non-program related KPIs that we have faced our greatest challenges. This hasn't changed. We have however, made marginal improvements in our non-program related results this year, with just about 63 percent of students

satisfied with the overall quality of GBC's facilities and services. This will remain an ongoing focus area for improvement.

I am happy to see steady improvement in our scores over recent years, and I want to thank each of you for your contribution to this achievement. I'm confident that by staying on The Path to Leadership, unfolding the next phase of our Academic Strategy and always maintaining our primary commitment to improving the student experience, this upward trend will continue in the years to come.



**FINANCE MINISTER LAUDS SKILLS TRAINING AT GEORGE BROWN:** Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan (second from left) chats with President Anne Sado (right), Renovation Technician student Janet Richards (left) and Director of Apprenticeship programs Rolf Priesnitz (second from right) on a pre-provincial budget visit to Casa Loma Campus on March 24. Duncan spoke with several students working in the carpentry lab and told reporters that Ontario needs many more skilled workers in the coming years. "You're going to see a huge emphasis on skills training," he said of the budget he made public the following day, which included new funding for employment preparation and skills training.



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